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House Committee on Elections and Ethics
Anderson House Office Building
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

To the House Elections and Ethics Committee:

I strongly urge you to reject House Concurrent Resolution 5.

It is up to every generation to preserve and build upon our liberty. That's why I've volunteered for many efforts to protect and expand voting rights, including the citizen initiatives that became Proposals 18-2 and 18-3 - both of which Michigan voters approved decisively. It's also why I strongly oppose HCR 5.

HCR 5 is a response to a bill in Congress, H.R. 1, which it calls an "overreach" on "state's rights"; however, the United States Constitution (Article I, Section 4) specifically empowers Congress to "by Law make or alter" regulations on elections. Congress has frequently exercised that power in order to protect and expand voters' rights. The most famous example of this is the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which was backed by strong majorities of both Republicans and Democrats in both the Senate¹ and House².

When it comes to voting and elections, Congress is not overreaching with H.R. 1; rather, many state legislatures are overreaching by infringing on voters' rights. H.R. 1 is a necessary and proper response to the many bills that have been introduced throughout the country - including some here in Michigan - that would restrict our rights. H.R. 1 would also continue the tradition of protecting and expanding American voters' rights through federal law.

Key provisions of H.R. 1 include:

- Allowing same-day voter registration, automatic registration, and online registration
- Prohibiting gerrymandering and requiring that congressional district lines be drawn by independent commissions
- Making voting easier for military and overseas voters
- Require disclosure of tax returns for presidential and vice-presidential candidates
- Requiring audits, hand recounts, and paper ballots or voter-verified paper trails
- Reforming our campaign finance system

As you know, many of these provisions are already incorporated into Michigan's election system. Following the decisive passages of Proposals 18-2 and 18-3, Michigan has once again become a leader in the areas of voting rights and election

¹ <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/89-1965/s78>

² <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/89-1965/h87>

administration. H.R. 1 would ensure that Americans in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia can enjoy the same rights we enjoy here in the Great Lakes State.

HCR 5 also falsely claims that legislation like H.R. 1 is "unwanted". However, this legislation is very much wanted by a strong majority of Americans. A recent poll by Data For Progress shows broad support for H.R. 1 among all groups of ages, races, genders, and educational backgrounds. Majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and independents in the poll supported it - even after pollsters mentioned that many of the bill's opponents call it an "overreach by the federal government".³ And as I mentioned above, Michigan voters overwhelmingly embraced many of these provisions when they passed Proposals 18-2 and 18-3 two and a half years ago.

Supporting HCR 5 would put you at odds with your constituents, including primary voters. It would also put you on the wrong side of history; in a nation that values individual liberty and voting rights, you will be on record opposing these values if you support HCR 5. Therefore, I urge you to reject HCR 5 and any other measures that oppose or limit our voting rights.

Sincerely,

Scott Urbanowski

³ https://www.filesforprogress.org/datasets/2021/1/dfp_hr1_polling.pdf